

PREFACE

Law enforcement agencies provide essential services to citizens to foster safe communities through crime reduction and deterrence. Law enforcement administrators train, supervise, and guide their personnel in performing a variety of tasks which help create safe communities. Solid training and policy bolsters employee confidence and competence in performing tasks while reducing vulnerability to liability.

To achieve its objectives, the agency must develop sound, written directives and govern activities accordingly. Written directives include all written guidance issued by an appropriate authority. Written directives help agency employees perform their jobs with confidence that they meet management's expectations. Through consistently applied and regularly revised orders, management can reduce employees' doubts, confusion, anxiety, and distrust.

The Sheriff is the agency's policymaker. The Sheriff on a yearly basis will review policies with command staff.

The manual is a collection of rules and regulations and general orders of the agency. This manual is divided into two components: rules and regulations, and general orders.

A rule and regulation, which contains rules primarily, is an administrative order governing organizational matters, e.g., leave policy, off-duty employment, and promotions. Rules and regulations are numbered consecutively "1-*" in this manual.

A general order, which primarily contains procedures, is an administrative order governing operational matters, e.g., use of force, transportation of prisoners, or searches and seizures. General orders are numbered consecutively "2-*" in this manual.

Policy is a statement of the agency's philosophy on a given issue. Policy consists of principles and values which guide the performance of agency employees.

No rule and regulation or general order is valid unless signed by the Sheriff.

Within the context of any directive, the use of the word "shall" denotes an action or behavior that is mandatory and unequivocal. The words "may" or "can" denote an action or behavior that is optional.

Any member of the agency may suggest or recommend change to the Sheriff concerning the policy manual.

This Manual is designed for all employees of the Valencia County Sheriff's Office.

FOREWORD

The policy manual is the property of the Valencia County Sheriff's Office. Further, members shall not show the manual to anyone other than agency personnel, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor. This manual cannot cover every aspect of law enforcement work or provide guidance in handling every possible situation. Rather, members will have to use experience, training, and good judgment to decide the best and safest way of handling any problem.

The Sheriff's Office Policy Manual will be published on line and be made available to all employees. Employees will receive a log-on to access the policy manual and will be required to electronically acknowledge receipt and understanding of the policy. Having the policy manual on line will allow employees to have the latest version of policy any time.

I shall vigorously enforce the rules of this manual; I expect members of the agency to observe them. I will review each violation, if necessary and determine any disciplinary action. Although much law enforcement work is left to members' discretion, if any employee departs from the provisions herein, he or she must demonstrate that his or her action was necessary.

All members of the agency with access to this manual hereinafter called the Valencia County Sheriff's Office Policy Manual shall promptly review and acknowledge receipt of new or updated policies as they are approved. Employees are encouraged to regularly review policy to remain familiar with the manual. Any question or understanding of policies will be brought to the attention of the chain of command as soon as possible for update or clarification.

Whenever members doubt the meaning or intent of a rule, policy, or procedure, they shall seek an interpretation or explanation from their supervisor.

All previously issued rules, policies, and procedures inconsistent or in conflict with this manual are hereby revoked.

Much research and preparation were performed in constructing this manual. I hope it will help you to understand what I expect of your performance as a law enforcement professional.

Electronically approved

Sheriff

Date